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A JANUARY EVENING, BY W. E. SCHOFIELD

SIXTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS.

The annual exhibition of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts has come to be the artistic event of the season in Philadelphia. Time was, and not so very long ago, when the management of this institution was content to stay quietly at home and pass benignly upon such works as were submitted as candidates for a place on the Academy walls. Then the exhibits were largely local in their character, and attracted comparatively little attention in the outside world. Nowadays things are run on quite a different plan. The management's representatives are busy all over the country, and in Europe as well, long before the exhibition is to open, collecting their materials. They are hungry for the latest works of prominent American artists, and they seek everywhere for attractions. As a result an Academy display is a gathering of the most representative canvases by native artists, for it is a proviso that the exhibitors must be American born.

Now and then some captious critic finds fault with this system, upon the ground that it does not give unknown artists a fair chance. The reply to this is that if the seeker for artistic recognition can paint or model well enough to deserve it he can always find a place for his work in the Academy galleries. An exhibition of the canvases rejected by the Academy's jury would be interesting from a different point of view than the painters intended, for it would be excruciatingly funny.

The present exhibition—the sixty-eighth annual—which opened with the usual private view on the evening of January 14, is fully up to the usual standard of excellence. The selection of exhibits has



"MUSING"
BY JOHN W. ALEXANDER

been most catholic in character, no particular school of art being favored more than another, but all coming in for their due share of appreciation. It is noticeable, by the way, that the impressionists are dropping very much into the background. The paintings of that school seen in this collection are few in number, the most conspicuous being those from the brush of Childe Hassam, a little group of French scenes painted with a tender appreciation of spring coloring.

There is hardly an American artist of prominence who is not represented by at least one canvas, and with such a plethora of riches, it is difficult to particularize without making what to some would appear

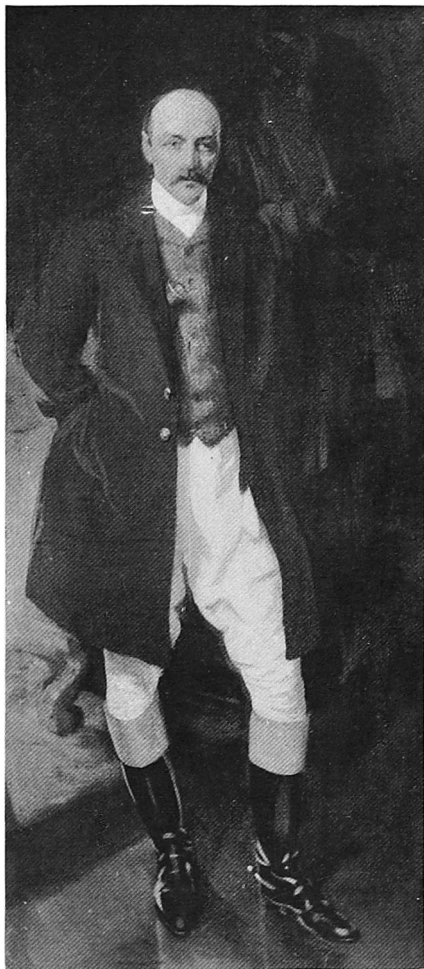


THE PLOUGHING OF THE EPHRETA BRETHERN, BY HARRY B. POOR

invidious comparisons. Nothing of the kind is intended, however, and I might as well state at this particular point that the photographs from which the illustrations are made were selected rather at random, and not chosen as the things most worth picturing.

The western wall of the largest gallery (Gallery F) is considered the place of honor at the Academy shows, and occupying the central position upon it this season we find a portrait study by E. C. Tarbell, "The Golden Screen" by title. It represents a young girl, who strongly resembles Ada Rehan, dressed in white and wearing a large feathered hat of almost blackish hue, seated in an easy attitude in front of a brilliant yellow screen. The light falls upon the lower part of one cheek, but the greater part of her face is in shadow as it

looks out of the canvas from beneath the big hat. As a whole the composition is a charming one, simple in conception and workmanship, as all works of true art should be.



THE MASTER OF THE HOUNDS
BY WILTON LOCKWOOD

Near by hangs John Alexander's "Musings," a poetic canvas depicting a willowy maiden playing the violoncello. Other examples of this same artist's clever work are not far distant, chief among which one notes "The Blue Bowl," showing a single female figure attired in a patterned dress which matches in tone and color the vessel the girl holds in her outstretched palm and which gives its title to the picture.

Very different in style, yet also found upon the western wall of gallery F, is Arthur B. Davies' Botticelli-like composition "At the Source," a canvas painted in a low key in which the central figure is a nude blonde woman bending over a woodland spring, while in the immediate foreground one sees another fair one, this time draped, gazing at her reflection in a looking-glass. That this picture should hang beside Tarbell's canvas, though as different from it as day is from night, goes to prove what I have said about the catholicity of choice displayed by the jury of selection.

John S. Sargent has six exhibits in this collection, one of which, a large canvas with full length portraits of Mr. and Mrs. S., finds a place upon the wall of honor. Like all this artist's work, it is an extremely clever piece of painting, striking in effect and very cleverly executed. Mrs. S. as pictured, is a young woman in a shirt waist and white skirt who holds her sailor hat jauntily against her hip, while her husband, clad in boating flannels, bearded and brown, stands some-

what behind her. The other Sargent pictures include portraits of Robert Louis Stevenson and Thomas B. Reed, and the scene in the upper story of a Spanish house, the latter a little canvas full of local color.

A strikingly original piece of composition comes from that eccentric genius Whistler. It depicts a cheery interior, in the center of which stands a young lady in a black riding costume; in the background a little girl in white is busy reading by a window, and in the mirror which occupies the left-hand side of the picture one sees reflected the head of another female occupant of the chamber.

John McLure Hamilton sends several of his pictures, among them portraits of Raffaelli and of Henri Rochefort, painted in his usual style.

One of the most striking pictures in the collection is John Lafarge's "The Divinity Kuwanon," a contemplative deity evidently. The goddess, seated in the attitude which one is accustomed to see in representations of Buddha, is shown sunk in deep thought in the midst of woodland surroundings and with a waterfall tumbling from the rocks to one side of her. The coloring is quiet, and the handling produces much the same effect as if the canvas, instead of being painted, were woven by an Oriental workman in sober-hued threads. The whole is decorative rather than pictorial, and considered as such is a capital piece of work.

A big canvas by Humpheys Johnston, catalogued as "Lorenzaccio," is a portrait of Sarah Bernhardt, in a masculine character—a striking bit of work, but the size is hardly warranted.



WINDOW FOR CHURCH OF THE
ASCENSION, BY J. ALDEN WEIR

One of the most important contributions by local men is Harry Poor's "Ploughing of the Ephreata Brethren," an incident from Pennsylvania history, the painting of which betrays a tendency to a return to the historic school, which might be fruitful of good results. The example under consideration shows that our artists may find picturesque subjects without going abroad for them.

The landscape painters are rather in the minority, but a thoroughly artistic study of a cloud effect by Max Bohm finds a prominent place on the walls. The "January Evening," by W. Elmer Schofield, which is the subject of one of our illustrations, is also a beautiful piece of painting, cold enough to make one who looks at it shiver. Foremost among the marine paintings are Alexander Harrison's canvases, which come direct from the Pacific coast with the paint still fresh upon their surface.



DEVOTION, BY WM. M. CHASE

Paintings with religious or semi-religious subjects are rather numerous. Most prominent of these is "L'Annonciation," by the Negro artist Tanner, which comes here from its Parisian triumph, via Chicago. William M. Chase contributes a canvas which may come under this category, but although clever in handling, this picture of the young religieuse strikes one as theatrical and over-sentimental.

The absence of the nude, save in the department devoted to sculpture, is rather remarkable. Only three or four pictures represent the undraped human figure, and these, with the exception of that by Arthur B. Davies, already mentioned, are unimportant. It seems almost as if American painters have had a change of heart in this direction. Or is it that shapely models are too hard to find?

Plastic art is well represented, the sculptors contributing many important examples of their art. There is a memorial exhibition of Olin L. Warner's work, including the dead sculptor's designs for the

doors of the Congressional Library, which were subsequently finished by Herbert Adams.

One of the most interesting things in this section is Charles



MOTHER AND CHILD, BY H. B. FULLER

Grafly's "From Generation to Generation," two figures, one a youth, one an ancient, which, I believe, has been seen in Chicago before now.

Some charming little figures, much on the same lines as those for which Bessie O. Potter is famous, are exhibited by Miss Enid Yandell, a young sculptress of much promise.

Paul W. Bartlett's "Columbus" and "Michael Angelo" are also here, as well as his design for the door of a tomb, while Daniel Chester French contributes an angel, which much resembles one we saw here on exhibition a year or so ago.

The water colors are important enough to have a gallery all to themselves, but a detailed account of them is forbidden at this moment for lack of space.

The usual awards are to be made: The Temple medals for the first and second-best painting; the Academy gold medal of honor; the Walter Lippincott prize for the best marine or landscape, which carries with it the right to purchase on the part of the donor; and the Mary Smith prize of one hundred dollars for the best painting by a resident woman artist.

From this hasty review it is hoped that the reader may gain a faint idea of one of the most important of American picture shows, one of which Philadelphians are justly proud.

NOTE—Dagnan-Bouveret's celebrated picture, "The Disciples at Emmaus," the one presented by Mr. Frick to the Carnegie Art Galleries, has been loaned to the Academy for display in connection with the present exhibition. It is hung in one of the corridors, and is the only painting by a foreign artist, an exception having been made in the usual rule so as to admit it.

FRANCIS J. ZIEGLER.

Philadelphia, Jan. 12, 1899.



BOSTON LETTER

The principal exhibition of the month is the Boston Art Club's, though it has no really important work presented. There is a general average of mediocrity. Two things are noticeable: the absence of the eccentricities in blue, yellow and green that have been prominent at some former exhibitions as examples of impressionism, and, with many artists, a marked striving after something new, not because they see what they paint in any such way, but simply to produce a sensation. So marked is the absence of the former so-called impressionistic work that it seems to indicate the backward swing of the pendulum of fancy that evolved monstrosities that might have been worshiped without breaking the commandments, for they certainly resembled nothing "in the heavens above, nor the earth below, nor in the waters under the earth."

When the club rescinds the rule that allows pictures to be exempt from jury decision the effect will be better for the artists who have work there, for the hanging of pictures, and for the enjoyment of the spectators. Very many Boston artists had no picture exhibited. Tar-